

NEWSPAPER READING BEHAVIOR AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

Newspaper is the granary of information around the world. Newspaper reading is a familiarized reading which influences readers to find out and penetrate the store house of knowledge in daily basis. The aim of present study is to examine the level of newspaper reading behaviour of the college students. The target population of the study consist postgraduate students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. On the basis of mailed questionnaire survey the study made some findings such as most of the respondents spent 30 mines daily mainly for improving reading skills, inspired by parents to read newspaper, depended mainly for social awareness, shared the knowledge to their friends. To increase the newspaper reading behaviour respondents should depend more on online medium of newspaper rather than printed medium.

Keywords: Behaviour, Reading, Newspaper, Students, TNAU.

Introduction

Mass communication is used for broadcasting, sharing the information for masses. Mass communication not only informs but also educates its user. Communication such as radio, television, film and newspaper affect the minds of the people. The deeds of the mass media follow closely the progress in various fields, informing people, reacting to policies, educating the students related to current events, creating the social climate in which development and nation building programme can take place.

“Newspapers cannot be defined by the second word paper. They’ve got to be defined by the first word news”(Sulzberg, 2004). The purpose of newspaper is to make people aware about the current information related to politics, business, sports, marketing, weather, crime as soon as possible in an efficient manner. The foremost function of the newspaper is to gather and disseminate the news to the people gathering from various corner of the world also make them to reach the task of the government. Reading is the art of learning something; newspaper reading is

the art of knowing many things. Newspaper is the repository of knowledge.

Newspaper reading habit is influenced by many factors such as parents, teachers, friends, siblings. Among these, parents are the great influencer according to (Stone and Wetherington, 1979). Newspaper reading habit is somewhat established by the time a person reaches the traditional college age of 18 (Stone &Wetherington, 1979) and is typically firmly established by the time a person reaches 25 to 30 years of age (Martire&Bartolomeo, 2004). By practicing, newspaper reading is associated with the attitude of the students (Fletcher & Shapley, 1994). Newspaper reading makes people masters in the society. With the reading habit of newspaper, people could be able to stand anywhere. This study was conducted with the following objectives such as to assess the level of newspaper reading habit of post graduate girl students and to identify the factors affecting their reading behaviour.

Material and Methods

As newspaper subscription was available in TNAU girl’s hostel, this study focused on respondents reading behavior. The post graduate girls students especially master degree students in TNAU were considered to draw samples randomly. In P.G, there were 20 departments and in each department 3 respondents from both I, II year were randomly selected.

The research design adopted for this study is ex-post-facto technique, since the phenomenon has already started and is

continuing. Ex-post-facto research is a systematic empirical enquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control over independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulatable. Inferences about relations among variables are made, without direct intervention, from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables (Kerlinger, 1973).

A well-structured questionnaire was prepared and used as the data collection tool. The variables for the study were preferred based on review of past literature and exiting research gaps. Among the 120 respondents, only 60 respondents were investigated for this study. Statistical tools like percentage analysis and cumulative frequency method were used to analyze the data.

Results and Discussion

The profile characteristics of the respondents were studied, as it would serve as a base for clear and thorough understanding about the respondent’s newspaper reading habits. The selected variables were family size, year of study, department, medium of education, board of education, language preferred to read newspaper, medium of newspaper, preference of newspaper, time spent on newspaper per day, subscription of newspaper. The data regarding the respondent’s profile were collected and categorized using percentage analysis and the results are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1.Respondent’s profile (n= 60)

Variable	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Family size	Nuclear	40	66.6
	Joint	20	33.3
Year of study	I st year	41	68.3
	II nd year	19	31.6
Department	Agribusiness Management	5	8.3
	Agronomy	4	6.66
	Pathology	3	5
	Environmental science	2	3.33
	Breeding	6	10

	Vegetable science	3	5
	Agri economics	3	5
	Agri extension	4	6.66
	Seed Science	6	10
	Soil science	4	6.66
	Nano technology	2	3.33
	Entomology	2	3.33
Medium of Education	Tamil	5	8.33
	English	55	91.66
	Others	2	3.33
Board of Education	CBSE	5	8.33
	State board	55	91.66
Language Preferred to Read Newspaper	Tamil	25	41.66
	English	33	55
	Others	2	3.33
Medium of Newspaper	Printed	57	95
	Online	3	5
Preference of Newspaper	The Hindu	42	70
	Dinamalar	8	13.3
	Dinamani	3	5
	Times of India	1	1.66
	Thinathanthi	5	8.33
	Prajavani	1	1.66
Time Spent on Newspaper per day	15 mins	1	1.66
	0 - 30 mins	46	76.6
	30 - 60 mins	10	16.6
	1 - 2 hrs	3	5
Subscription of Newspaper	Yes	45	75
	No	15	25

From the table 1, it is found that more than half (66.6%) of the respondents had nuclear family and remaining 33.3per cent had joint family. It was found that 68.3per cent respondents belongs to the I year of P.G. in TNAU. The remaining 31.6per cent of respondents is in the hands of II year. This study revealed that 10per cent of maximum response for the questionnaire were obtained from SST (Seed science & technology) department, followed by agribusiness of 8.3per cent respondents. Agribusiness department respondents were preceded by agronomy, agricultural extension, soil science, and statistics respondents of 6.66per cent in that order. Remaining respondents belongs

to plant pathology, nematology, agricultural economics, vegetable science were of per cent, crop physiology, entomology, nano technology, environment science were of 3.33per cent, spices, biotechnology, microbiology, floriculture were of 1.66per cent. Also shows that majority of the respondents 91.66per cent preferred to read English newspaper which may due to subscription in girl's hostel, TNAU. 8.33per cent of respondents used to read Tamil newspaper may be due to respondent's board of education which is followed by other state respondents of 3.33per cent.

Research study interpreted that most of the respondents were belongs to

state board of education which was accounted as 91.66per cent, 8.33per cent of respondent had CBSE board of education. This research study revealed that 55per cent of respondents preferred to read English newspaper which is followed by Tamil language of 41.66per cent respondents. Other language newspaper preferred by 3.33per cent respondents which represents other state respondents. 95per cent of respondents used the printed copy of newspaper to read and 5% of respondents used the online print to read. Majority of respondents preferred printed copy due to more compatibility in reading.

The findings indicate that majority of respondents 70per cent favored ‘The Hindu’ newspaper to read which is followed by ‘Dinamalar’ newspaper of 13.3per cent respondents and 58.33per cent of respondents used to read ‘Thinathanthi’ newspaper. Only 66per cent respondent preferred to read ‘Times of India’ and ‘Prajavani’. This table shows that 76.6per cent of the respondent spent daily 30 mins for newspaper reading, 16.6per cent of the respondents spent 30 – 60 mins

to read the newspaper. Minimum number of the respondents 5per cent used 1 – 2 hrs daily for newspaper reading which is followed by 1.66per cent of the respondent spent 15 mins to read the newspaper.

Three fourth (75%) of respondents had subscription of newspaper in their house at the same time one fourth (25%) of them revealed non subscription of the newspaper & used to read newspaper in library and college.

In the study, following findings were made such as most of the respondents belongs to I year. 91.66per cent of the respondents had English medium of education and also from state board. Hence half of the respondents preferred English language newspaper to read. Majority of the respondents spent 30 mins daily to read newspaper.

Reading behavior of the respondents

In the reading behavior of newspaper, the variables that consume the respondents time were choice of topics, regularity in reading newspaper which is categorized in the following table 2.

Table 2. Reading behavior of the respondents (n= 60)

Characteristics	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Choice of Topics	Current affairs	41	68.3
	Sports	6	10
	Business	4	6.66
	Politics	4	6.66
	Movie	3	5
	Science and technology	2	3.33
Regularity in Reading Newspaper	Daily	21	35
	Weekly	24	40
	Twice in a week	13	21.66
	Thrice per week	1	1.66
	Based on time	1	1.66

From the table 2, study conveyed that most of the respondents (68.3%) used to read the newspaper for the current affairs, 10 per cent of the respondents sports news which is followed by 6.66 per cent of respondents chosen business, politics columns to read. Very minimum respondents preferred newspaper for movie (5%) and science & technology (33%) respectively. Also communicated

that 35 per cent of respondent’s used to read newspaper daily. Majority of the respondents (40%) used to read newspaper at the weekend. 18.2 per cent of respondents read the newspaper twice a week. 1.66 per cent of the respondents read newspaper thrice per week and based on their time. Majority of the respondents (68.3%) preferred to read current affairs in

the newspaper and mostly spent the weekend time to read the newspaper.

Insight behaviour

The insight behaviour of the respondents was analysed by studying the motives of reading newspaper, inspiration and categorized in the following table 3.

Table 3. Insight behavior of the respondents (n=60)

Characteristics	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Motives of Reading Newspaper	Job	4	6.66
	Examination	4	6.66
	Social awareness	45	75
	Entertainment	6	10
	To improve reading skills	1	1.66
Inspiration	Teachers	11	18.3
	Parents	29	48.3
	Siblings	2	3.33
	Self interests	3	5
	Friends	14	23.3
	Both parents & teachers	1	1.66

The table 3 endowed that 75 per cent of respondents with social awareness motives for reading the newspaper, 10 per cent of respondents preferred newspaper for entertainment. 6.66 per cent of respondents seek newspaper for job and examination purposes. 1.66 per cent respondent used newspaper to improve reading skills. Results also reveal that 48.3 per cent of respondents got inspiration from parents to read the newspaper, 23.3 per cent of respondents were inspired by friends, and 18.3 per cent by teachers to read newspaper. 5 per cent, 3.33 per cent and 1.66 per cent of respondents read

newspaper by self-interests, siblings and by both parents and teachers respectively.

Most of the respondents (75%) were motivated by social awareness to read the newspaper, and 48.3 per cent were inspired by parents to read the newspaper.

Information sharing behavior

By reading the newspaper, respondents gained knowledge and shared the knowledge to other respondents. By gaining the knowledge, respondents developed many skills which were categorized as information sharing behavior, skills developed in the following table 4.

Table 4. Information sharing behaviour (n= 60)

Characteristics	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Information sharing behavior	Friends	46	76.66
	Parents	13	21.66
	No one	1	1.66
Skill developed	Reading skills	44	73.33
	Writing skills	1	1.66
	Vocabulary	13	21.66
	Comprehensive	2	3.33

In this table 4, study showed that majority of the respondents (76.66%) shared information with friends which is followed by shared news with parents (21.66%). Also manifested that majority of the respondents (73.33%) developed reading skills by reading newspaper, followed by 21.66 per cent of

respondents developed vocabulary through their reading behavior. 3.33 per cent and 1.66 per cent of respondents developed comprehensive and writing skills respectively. Majority of the respondents (76.66%) shared the information to their friends, 73.33% of the respondents

developed their reading skills by reading the newspaper.

Conclusion

The future pillars of a nation are students and by developing newspaper reading habit can make themselves a good citizen who can throw in for themselves as well as for their country. Most of the respondents preferred newspaper to get general knowledge. But in current world gaining general knowledge alone could not help the respondents to compete. To get more subject knowledge respondents should have wide through newspaper reading like science and technology part. To influence a habit of reading in children at the young age parents should afford a supporting environment. Now a day's almost all respondents have smart phone and spent most the time with that phone. So respondents should give preference to read newspaper through online rather than printed copy. If the dependence on the printed form of newspaper is reduced then utility behaviour of respondents on newspaper reading shoots up. All the concerned parties should manipulate students to read and should provide good cooperation to read newspaper. Within

university, faculties should facilitate the reading behaviour among the students. Also while giving thesis, term paper, and assignment teachers should stick on in evaluations like mandatorily reviewing the current issues related to the topics. It would improve the respondent's subject knowledge as well as general knowledge. To develop language skills one has to develop to read English newspaper. Internet facilities should be widened to meet the need of the respondents in the universities as well as in the habitat.

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